



4000-01-U

DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

Privacy Act of 1974; Computer Matching Program between the Department of Education and the Department of Justice

AGENCY: Department of Education.

ACTION: Notice.

SUMMARY: This document provides notice of the continuation of a computer matching program between the Department of Education and the Department of Justice. The continuation is effective on the date in paragraph 5.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

Section 421(a)(1) of the Controlled Substances Act (21 U.S.C. 862(a)(1)) includes provisions regarding the judicial denial of Federal benefits. Section 421 of the Controlled Substances Act, which was originally enacted as section 5301 of the Anti-Drug Abuse Act of 1988, and which was amended and redesignated as section 421 of the Controlled Substances Act by section 1002(d) of the Crime Control Act of 1990, Pub. L. 101-647 (hereinafter referred to as "section 5301"), authorizes Federal and State judges to deny certain Federal benefits (including student financial assistance under title IV of the Higher Education Act of 1965, as amended (HEA)) to individuals convicted of drug trafficking or possession of a controlled substance.

In order to ensure that HEA student financial assistance is not awarded to individuals subject to denial of benefits under court orders issued pursuant to section 5301, the Department of Justice and the Department of Education implemented a computer matching program. The 18-month computer matching agreement (CMA) was recertified for an additional 12 months on December 20, 2014. The 12-month recertification of the CMA will automatically expire on December 19, 2015.

For the purpose of ensuring that HEA student financial assistance is not awarded to individuals denied benefits by court orders issued under the Denial of Federal Benefits Program, the Department of Education must continue to obtain from the Department of Justice identifying information regarding individuals who are the subject of section 5301 denial of benefits court orders. The purpose of this notice is to announce the continued operation of the computer matching program and to provide certain required information concerning the computer matching program.

In accordance with the Privacy Act of 1974 (5 U.S.C. 552a), as amended by the Computer Matching and Privacy Protection Act of 1988 (Pub. L. 100-503), the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) Guidelines on the Conduct of

Matching Programs (54 FR 25818, June 19, 1989), and OMB Circular A-130, the following information is provided:

1. Names of Participating Agencies.

The Department of Education (ED) and the Department of Justice (DOJ).

2. Purpose of the Match.

The purpose of this matching program is to ensure that the requirements of section 421 of the Controlled Substances Act (originally enacted as section 5301 of the Anti-Drug Abuse Act of 1988, Pub. L. 100-690, 21 U.S.C. 853a, which was amended and redesignated as section 421 of the Controlled Substances Act by section 1002(d) of the Crime Control Act of 1990, Pub. L. 101-647) (hereinafter referred to as "section 5301") are met.

DOJ is the lead contact agency for information related to section 5301 violations and, as such, provides this data to ED. ED seeks access to the information contained in the DOJ Denial of Federal Benefits Clearinghouse System (DEBARS) database that is authorized under section 5301 for the purpose of ensuring that HEA student financial assistance is not awarded to individuals subject to denial of benefits under court orders issued pursuant to the Denial of Federal Benefits Program.

3. Authority for Conducting the Matching Program.

Under section 5301, ED must deny Federal benefits to any individual upon whom a Federal or State court order has imposed a penalty denying eligibility for those benefits. Student financial assistance under the HEA is a Federal benefit and under section 5301, ED must, in order to meet its obligations under the HEA, have access to information about individuals who have been declared ineligible under section 5301.

While DOJ provides information under section 5301 about individuals who are ineligible for Federal benefits to the General Services Administration (GSA) for inclusion in GSA's List of Parties Excluded from Federal Procurement and Nonprocurement Programs, DOJ and ED have determined that matching against the DOJ database is more efficient and effective than matching against the GSA List. The DOJ database has specific information about the HEA programs for which individuals are ineligible, as well as the expiration of the debarment period, making the DOJ database more complete than the GSA List. Both of these elements are essential for a successful match.

4. Categories of Records and Individuals Covered by the Match.

ED receives data from the DOJ DEBARS system that is used to match title IV, HEA applicant data in ED's Central

Processing System (Federal Student Aid Application File (18-11-01)). ED will use the Social Security number (SSN), date of birth, and the first two letters of an applicant's last name for the match.

The DOJ DEBARS system contains the names, SSNs, dates of birth, and other identifying information regarding individuals convicted of Federal or State offenses involving drug trafficking or possession of a controlled substance who have been denied Federal benefits by Federal or State courts. This system of records also contains information concerning the specific program or programs for which benefits have been denied, as well as the duration of the period of ineligibility. DOJ will make available for the matching program the records of only those individuals who have been denied Federal benefits under one or more of the title IV, HEA programs.

5. Effective Dates of the Matching Program.

The matching program will be effective on the latest of the following three dates: (A) December 20, 2015; (B) thirty (30) days after notice of the matching program has been published in the Federal Register; or (C) forty (40) days after a report concerning the matching program has been transmitted to OMB and transmitted to Congress along with a copy of this agreement, unless OMB waives 10 days of

this 40-day period for compelling reasons, in which case, 30 days after transmission of the report to OMB and Congress.

The matching program will continue for 18 months after the effective date of the CMA and may be extended for an additional 12 months thereafter, if the conditions specified in 5 U.S.C. 552a(o)(2)(D) have been met.

6. Address for Receipt of Public Comments or Inquiries.

Individuals wishing to comment on this matching program or obtain additional information about the program, including requesting a copy of the computer matching agreement between ED and DOJ, may contact Marya Dennis, Management and Program Analyst, U.S. Department of Education, Federal Student Aid, Union Center Plaza, 830 First Street, NE., Washington, DC 20202-5454. Telephone: (202) 377-3385.

Accessible Format: If you use a telecommunications device for the deaf (TDD) or a text telephone (TTY), call the Federal Relay Service, toll free, at 1-800-877-8339.

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AUTHORITY: 5 U.S.C. 552a; 21 U.S.C. 862(a)(1).

James W. Runcie,
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